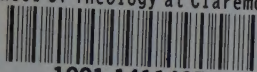


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Human Progress and the Inward Light

Thomas Hodgkin, D.C.L.



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Swarthmore Lecture

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Swarthmore Lecture, 1911.

HUMAN PROGRESS AND THE INWARD LIGHT

BY
THOMAS HODGKIN, D.C.L.
Author of "Italy and her Invaders," etc.

PUBLISHED FOR THE WOODBROOKE EXTENSION COMMITTEE

BY
HEADLEY BROTHERS
BISHOPSGATE, LONDON, E.C.

1911

Theology Library
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
AT CLAREMONT
California

HEADLEY BROTHERS,
PRINTERS,
LONDON ; AND ASHFORD, KENT.

Preface

The Swarthmore Lectureship was established by the Woodbrooke Extension Committee, at a meeting held December 9th, 1907: the minute of the Committee providing for "an annual lecture on some subject relating to the Message and Work of the Society of Friends." The name "Swarthmore" was chosen in memory of the home of Margaret Fox, which was always open to the earnest seeker after Truth, and from which loving words of sympathy and substantial material help were sent to fellow-workers.

The Lectureship has a two-fold purpose: first, to interpret further to the members of the Society of Friends their Message and Mission; and secondly, to bring before the public the spirit, the aims and the fundamental principles, of the Friends.

The previous lectures of the series have been as follows:—

1908: "Quakerism a Religion of Life," by
Rufus M. Jones, M.A., D.Litt., of
Haverford College, Pa.

1909 : "Spiritual Guidance in the Experience
of the Society of Friends," by
William Charles Braithwaite, B.A.,
LL.B.

1910 : "The Communion of Life," by Joan
Mary Fry.

The above lectures have been delivered on
the evening preceding the assembly of the
Friends' Yearly Meeting in each year.

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Human Progress and the Inward Light

I.

“Let us make man in our image.”

It may well be doubted whether, since the first days of the preaching of Christianity, there has ever been a more complete change in the mental outlook of educated men than that which has been wrought in the life-time of the men of my generation by the announcement and the general acceptance of the doctrine of Evolution.

In my boyhood the general belief of the unscientific many—and also, I think we may safely say, of the scientific few—was that the genera and species of animal and vegetable life had existed since the beginning of the world, very much in the same condition in which we see them around us at the present day, separate, distinct, invariable. Now, though there may be many

vast spaces still unmapped in the history of organic life, I think we may safely assert that the overwhelming majority of educated men believe that history to have been one of constant development and change ; believe that there is, if we had faculties to trace it, a true genealogical connection between the lowest and the highest forms of life. In other words, we believe in Creation by Evolution ; and, far from feeling our reverence for the Creator in any wise lessened, it is rather immeasurably increased by our conviction that He has been for ever working through the ages elaborating His great and wonderful designs. If one may venture so to alter the utterance of the poet :

Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose
runs,
And the ways of God are widened with the process of the
suns.

So thoroughly has this view of the manner of creation now taken possession of our souls, that I think we should most of us feel it a sore trial and strain upon our faith if some new revelation of the rocks assured us that, in reality, "all things continue as they were since the foundation of the world" ; that at some not very distant date, say six or seven thousand years ago, the world as we

know it, with its almost infinite variety of animal and vegetable life, sprang suddenly into being.

To put briefly the difference between the new and the old points of view, I think we may say that a devout thinker, who in the days of our fathers would have said,

“ God *made* the world,”

now with equal reverence says,

“ God *is making* the world ” ;

and believes that in His wonderful condescension, God is enabling His favoured creature, man, to understand a little of the manner of its making. It may, of course, be objected that this is not the point of view which is taken by the writer of the early chapters of Genesis. No ; the point of view is different, but the work looked at is wonderfully the same. When we have given up the vain attempt to make those chapters square with the knowledge now possessed by the human race concerning Astronomy and Geology, it is marvellous how much of the *religious* teaching contained in them remains unshaken. Many years ago I wrote concerning the Creation-story of Genesis : “ It is a vision related by a child, but the child has seen wonderful things ” ; and to that statement I still adhere. Though Science must substitute the imperfect tense of

the verb "to create" for the perfect tense used in the Hebrew Scriptures, we still need the words of Genesis to give full expression to our thought.

God said, "Let there be Light." He is saying those world-transforming words still. He said them when His Son came into the world, He "in whom was Life, and the Life was the Light of men." It still remains the central truth of the spiritual world, that "God is Light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth." And not only to the spirit, but also to the intellect of man the Lord our God bringeth Light. Obscurantism is no part of the Divine government of the world. Whether they have always recognized it or not, all the great discoverers of scientific truth, the Galileos, the Newtons, the Darwins, have been "ministers of His who did His pleasure."

Pre-eminently, I believe those words of the writer of Genesis to be true, which he uses concerning the creation of man: "And God said, Let us make man in our image." Only here, as in the upheaval of the mountains, we have to behold an age-long and a still continuing process. The Lord God is still engaged in this glorious work of making—might we dare to say

of re-making—man in His spiritual image. This is the true and inner meaning of that mighty drama which we call the History of the human race, with all its sighs and tears and bloodshed, with all its joys, its aspirations and its triumphs ; and till man is fully made in the image of his Creator the work of creation will not be complete.

Some light upon this Divine process of the re-making of the human race may, I think, be derived from the inspired history of God's dealing with the nation of Israel. Even as He chose that people to be the especial recipients of the truth that "the Lord thy God is one God," and that all attempts to represent Him in material form are an abomination in His sight ; even as He condescended to enter into covenant relations with them ; even as He bore with their repeated acts of disobedience and idolatry, and still called them "beloved for the fathers' sake" ; so has it been with the human race as a whole. He has borne with us for these thousands of years. Often as we have relapsed into that old beast life, inherited from our progenitors in the dim past, He still bears with us, still continues His gracious work of raising us

On stepping stones
Of our dead selves to higher things ;

still says, even of this ungrateful, unreasonable race, "This people have I formed for Myself: they shall show forth My praise." The Egypt, out of which at some time of unimaginable remoteness the first specimens of the *Homo Sapiens* of the naturalist were led, was that world of mere animal life which had existed on this planet for millenniums. A world it was in itself glorious and wonderful, a great advance on the mere vegetative life which had preceded it, as that was an advance on the inorganic existences before it. But this world of animal life, with all its vanity, its splendour, and what we, looking back on its history, may venture to call its "glorious wars," had for its essential principle, as Darwin truly said, "the survival of the fittest:" strength, cunning, the subordination of all other faculties to the gratification of the passions of hunger and desire, this was the aspect of that abysmal Egypt from which our human progenitors emerged.

Already, even in emerging, they brought with them a measure of redemption for some of their fellows. The loyalty of the dog and the horse to his master, man, had in it something of a spiritual charm. It was already an advance on the mere principle of "Every one for himself,"

which prevailed before man came upon the scene, and which some deniers of the Spiritual try to persuade us is the last word of the trained intellect of man to-day. Not such is our belief. While admitting that "the survival of the fittest," the strongest, the most brutal, the most selfish, was generally¹ the law of that wild, warring, animal world out of which we sprang, we believe that the law of that higher world to which man, remade in the image of his Creator, belongs, is contained in that series of sentences beginning "Blessed are they," which were uttered by Jesus of Nazareth on the Galilean hill.

Thus then, when the Apostle Paul enumerates the works of the flesh and sets them in contrast with the works of the Spirit,² he is contrasting that lower animal world, out of which our progenitors emerged, with the higher spiritual world to which it is the purpose of the Almighty to raise us; and when this purpose is accomplished then will the great words "Let us make man in our image" be finally complete.

¹ I say "generally" because we must not forget the noble unselfishness of the maternal instinct even in the brute creation. Henry Drummond has well called this instinct "the struggle for the life of others."

² Galatians v. 19-23.

Some, no doubt, of our modern thinkers have gone too far in suggesting that by this process of development *alone* they can explain, or rather explain away, the nature of sin and even account for the origin of evil. The thought of evolution may perhaps guide us a few inches on the road towards the solution of that great problem, but there will be an immense distance still untraversed, and, as I believe, untraversable by our intellects so long as we are in this state of being. By all means let the elimination of the bestial nature be conceived of as going forward in humanity : that elimination of which Tennyson was thinking when he wrote the words,

And let the ape and tiger die.

But there will yet remain in the possibilities of the human character something darker, subtler, more malignant : a poison not of the flesh but of the intellect : a corruption of the best and highest in man, which is therefore in itself "the worst" ; something which the Apostle Paul was thinking of when he wrote the words, "spiritual wickedness in high places" ; something which the author of Faust was thinking of when he drew the portrait of Mephistopheles. No, we are assuredly not yet at the heart of the mystery of the existence of evil

when we try to express it in terms of evolution ; and yet we may reverently acknowledge that *some* of the clash and discord in man's nature, that some, even much, of the needless misery of the world, is due to the fact that he who has to be re-made in the image of the Maker has dragged up with him out of the slime somewhat of the nature of the brute.

Furthermore, it was at this stage of the evolution of man from the brute that there came the possibility of sin. For, as the Apostle Paul so truly says : " Where there is no law there is no transgression." ¹ Every communication of the Divine mind brings with it to the receiver its own measure of responsibility. The light involves the shadow. There is practically no law for the animal, and therefore no transgression. " Sin is not imputed where there is no law " ; or, in our modern phraseology, moral responsibility is the price which we of the human race pay for our high rank in creation : a burden which is not laid on the creatures, our vassals. " The glory of the animal is one, but the glory of the spiritual is another."

This re-making in the image of God the Father Almighty we, as Christians, believe to

¹ Rom. iv. 15.

have reached its crisis when Jesus of Nazareth appeared upon the stage of humanity. No doubt there are other aspects under which that Revelation Life may be viewed. Reconciliation, Atonement, Sacrifice, are all figures which express realities of Divine purpose in the mission and message of our Lord ; but the thought with which we have now to deal is the setting forth of Christ as the Ideal Son of Man, as manifesting in His human life the completed design of the Creator, as fulfilling in Himself the long prophecy of the age, " Let us make man in our image." It may be worth while to collect the chief passages of Scripture which show this to have been the heavenly purpose. They have been the subject of less polemical theology than some of the texts bearing on the doctrine of His sacrificial death, and thus have perhaps received less than their due share of attention.

" But and if our Gospel be veiled, it is veiled in them that are perishing ; in whom the god of this age hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, *who is the image of God*, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4). " The Father, who hath translated us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love, *who is the image of the invisible*

God, the first-born of all creation" (Col. i. 15). "Ye have put off the old man with his doings and have put on *the new man which is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of Him that created him*, where there is"—no distinction of nationality—"neither Greek, nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all." (*Ibid.* iii. 9-11.) Incidentally we may note what a wound is here given to that race-pride, or those race hatreds, which are among the most powerful survivals of the old untransformed animal nature within us.

"Till we all attain unto the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. iv. 13). So a man who is not re-made in the image of God, in the likeness of Christ, even though he have the transcendent intellect of Napoleon, is but a stunted growth, an undeveloped being.

"That ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, who is being destroyed by his deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man, who by the power of God

is created unto righteousness and true holiness " (*Ibid* iv. 22-24).

" His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the world, who being the effulgence of His glory and *the very image*¹ of His substance, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high " (Heb. i. 2-3).

Though it is not exactly in a line with these passages, we may notice that early utterance of Peter showing how thoroughly his view of the Person of Christ coincided with that of his brother Apostle. He said to the wondering multitude in Solomon's porch, " Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Captain of Life (τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς ζωῆς), whom God raised from among the dead, whereof we are all witnesses " (Acts iii. 14, 15).

The same word, ἀρχηγός, whether we translate it " Prince " or " Captain," meets us in the tenth verse of the second chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews : " For it became Him for whom

¹ The word *Χαρακτήρ* here used is different from that which we find in the other passages quoted, which is *εἰκών*. *Χαρακτήρ* seems to mean the image engraved in a seal, not the impression on the wax, but the corresponding image on the seal itself, the matrix of the impression.

are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons into glory, to make the *Archēgos* of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Here we have a hint of the mystery that this age-long contest between the lower and the higher, involved, as an apparently necessary consequence, pain. The Prince of Life must undergo death; not even in Him is the image of the Creator carved without suffering; suffering that maketh perfect. But we also find in this passage strong emphasis laid on the truth that Christ neither suffered nor was glorified for Himself alone. He was the Firstborn among many brethren; it was the Father's will that he should "bring many sons unto glory." As the writer goes on to show, there is a close and eternal brotherhood between Christ and His redeemed ones; "Both He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one"; and inasmuch as His brethren, or (slightly changing the metaphor) the children whom God had given Him, were sharers of flesh and blood, "He Himself also took part of the same." He stooped to enter into this lower animal-descended world, and thereby underwent that law of suffering and death to which we all are subject.

Yes, this is the purpose for which the Son of God was manifested "in the flesh," in this body of our humiliation, in this body of our glory, that He might be the means of new-making myriads of human beings in the likeness of the All-Holy One. And this stupendous transformation, though it takes place on our little planet, is perhaps the greatest wonder in all God's visible universe. For "the earnest expectation of the Creation [the intent gaze of that which we call Nature] is waiting for the revelation of the sons of God." "For Nature was made subject to vanity [to the law of change and decay], not of her own will, but by the decree of Him who thus subjected her, in the hope that she too shall one day be set free from the bondage of decay, and brought into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation is groaning and suffering the pangs of travail until the present hour ; and not only so, but we ourselves too, who have already the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we too groan internally, waiting to be owned as sons by the redemption of our body" (Rom. viii. 19-23). O, these wonderful words of Paul, how little, yet how great, they make the lives of men to appear ! The clash of empires, the

war of classes, the systems of philosophers, even man's triumphs over the visible universe—railways, aëroplanes, wireless telegraphy—what are all these in comparison with that manifestation of the Sons of God for which, with unaverted gaze (*ἀποκαταδοκία*), the whole Creation looks and longs!

We know that children ought not to be allowed to see half-done work. When we look on this half-done work of the Almighty we get to understand a little more of the answer to the doubt, "My Lord delayeth His coming." The faithful souls who surrounded Jesus Christ during His personal ministry thought that some of them at least should surely see Him again before their life on earth was ended. Now to us, looking back over nearly twenty centuries, the time seems wearisomely long; and we are tempted to say faint-heartedly, "Where is the promise of His coming?" Not long, O faint heart! if thou thinkest of the mightiness of the work, lifting up a whole race out of the bondage of corruption, and displaying it to the Universe: the manifestation of the glory of the children of God. Even we children of civilized Europe know how hard it is in a few generations to lift the backward races of mankind appreciably nearer to

our own level of culture ; and shall we marvel that even two millenniums after the manifestation of Christ “ we see not yet all things put under Him ? ” No, assuredly, nor are these two thousand years long if we compare them with the immeasurable ages, as they appear to us, during which were proceeding the earlier acts of the mighty drama of organic life upon our planet. Now that the curtain has been in part withdrawn, we can understand, a little more than even Apostles and Evangelists, the meaning of the word *Aion* (or its equivalent in Aramaic), which they learned of their Divine Teacher ; and we have reasons drawn from human science for acquitting our Maker of “ slackness concerning His promise,” because an interval apparently so long, but one scarcely to be noticed on the scale of geologic time has elapsed since the last farewell of Jesus to His disciples.

To close this part of my argument, I may say that the shape under which these well-known truths have presented themselves to my mind—for we all have need of figures and parables to enable us to apprehend spiritual truths—is something like this. On a lower plane of infinite extent is stretched out the great animal world to which by descent we belong. Above in the

Heavenlies, but not in an astronomic heaven, is outspread the City of God, that higher plane of life, to which our Maker has willed to raise us, to which, notwithstanding all apparent defeats and failures, He will yet raise His creature man. Just because He is the Lord God Almighty, and His eternal purpose shall not be defeated, His promise shall not "fail for evermore."

We have been accustomed from our childhood to hear, in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, exhortations to give glory to God, to do all for God's glory; or we have heard the Church refrain, the *Gloria Patri*, repeated so many thousands of times that the words have almost lost their meaning. Yet I trust we have each of us sometimes faced the question, "What do we really mean when we talk of God's glory?" Assuredly it is not glory such as the great world conquerors have dreamed of: Louis XIV., when he reared his palace and dedicated it "*à toutes les gloires de la France*," or Napoleon, "who, when France asked for rights, thus made reply, 'Thou hast my glory.'"

It is not, as some of our poorest hymns seem unwisely to convey, the glory of an Eastern despot, surrounded by sycophantic slaves. I venture to suggest that the glory of God may be

symbolized to us by the word Success: the success of the Almighty and All-loving One in this marvellous design—a design which to limited intelligences might well seem hopeless—of making, or rather re-making, this wayward creature man in His own image. When that is finished, and the mighty problem is solved, then will come the crowning glory. “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ”—the vision falsely offered on the Mount of Temptation will in very truth be realised.

The analogy just suggested, of the two planes on which life may be lived, the animal and the spiritual, the lower and the higher, seem to be justified by Paul’s words in the Epistle to the Philippians (iii. 13, 14), “Forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal, unto the prize of *our upward calling*¹ of God in Christ Jesus.”

II.

“They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.”

For us who believe that this age-long ascent of the human race has been accomplished in

¹ Τῆς ἀνω κλήσεως, better translated “upward” than “high.”

Heb 8"

accordance with the eternal purpose of the Almighty One, and is going forward, and will at last be carried to a successful issue under His guidance and generalship, the question arises, "How has the word of command been given, and whence has man obtained the knowledge of His will ? "

As believers in the Christian revelation we answer without hesitation : " Pre-eminently by the coming of Jesus Christ into the world. The message which He brought to us from the Father has done more to raise us out of the pit of our old merely animal existence than all the speculations of all the philosophers, though many of them too had wonderful glimpses of the Divine Light."

But, as we all know, there have been long intervals in the world's history, and there are still vast spaces in the inhabited world's surface, to which the mere intellectual knowledge of the work and words of Jesus of Nazareth has never penetrated ; and yet even in these there has been a measure of ascent accomplished. How did the eternal purpose make itself manifest in these ? We answer that as (in the words of Paul) part of that purpose was " that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him

and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us," so there was and still is in the soul of every man, who has not by long-continued sin succeeded in stifling it, that which our early Friends called the "Light Within," or the "Divine Seed," that which we in our generation, by a mode of expression which comes more naturally to us, call the Voice of the Lord speaking to the soul of man.

"Do you mean the Conscience?" is a question which is often asked, when we plead for the continued existence of this Divine gift. Yes, the Conscience, which has certainly had a mighty part to play in the drama of the re-making of man; but also something much more than the Conscience, the existence in man of a hearing ear, which has often enabled him to distinguish between two modes of action, neither in itself wrong, which of the two it is his Lord's will that he should choose; in short that which our forefathers so often spoke of as "the perceptible guidance of the Holy Spirit."

The relation of this faculty to the ordinary working of Conscience was so well expressed by our late dear friend Caroline Stephen, in her book entitled *Quaker Strongholds*, that I must be allowed to borrow her words.

“ That individual and immediate guidance, in which we recognize that ‘ the finger of God is come unto us ’ seems to come in, as it were, to complete and perfect the work rough-hewn by morality and conscience. We may liken the laws of our country to the cliffs of our island, over which we rarely feel ourselves in any danger of falling ; the moral standard of our social circle to the beaten highway road which we can hardly miss. Our own conscience would then be represented by a fence, by which some parts of the country are enclosed for each one, the road itself at times barred or narrowed. And that Divine guidance of which I am speaking could be typified only by the pressure of a hand upon ours, leading us gently to step to the right or the left, in a manner intended for and understood by ourselves alone.”)

To show how deeply rooted in the mind of man is the persuasion that this Divine guidance is a not unattainable blessing, I will ask you to ascend with me through twenty-three centuries of time, to go from the daughter of an English statesman to the son of an Athenian sculptor ; and, while the words of Caroline Stephen are still ringing in our ears, to listen to the voice of Socrates the son of Sophroniscus. It is thus that

he spake to his judges when he was on trial for his life : “ It has been my portion through life to hear from childhood a Divine Voice, and, whenever I heard it, it was always by way of turning me back from something that I was about to do, but never urging me onward. This it was, O Athenians, that kept me back from engaging in public affairs, and I think herein it did you and me good service, for had I become a politician I should long ago have perished, since no one can long fight for the just and noble against the tendencies to lawlessness in the State without meeting his doom. And in that case you also would have received no benefit from my teaching.”

Again, when the verdict of guilty had been brought in, and he was uttering his beautiful address to those of his judges who had voted for his acquittal, he could not but revert to his favourite theme of the Divine Voice, drawing an argument even from its silence. “ In all previous time this Divine Oracle has been continually with me, often checking me from quite trifling enterprises on which I was about to engage. But now a thing has occurred to me, as ye yourselves see, which would be commonly considered the last and worst of evils. Yet neither

when I was leaving my house, nor when I mounted hither to the Judgment Hall, nor at any point of my defence, did this warning voice which so often checked me in other discourses interpose to stop me. What conclusion am I to draw from this ? I will tell you. I conjecture that the meaning of it is that the thing which has happened to me is Good, not Evil ; for never would the accustomed sign have been withheld from me unless I had been on my way to receive some great benefit."

That this habit of listening to and obeying the Divine Voice does not produce a timid, unmanly character, full of foolish fears and niggling scruples, is sufficiently shown by the whole life of Socrates—a life full of earnest, importunate striving for what he deemed to be the truth, but above all by that memorable scene in October, 406 B.C., when for the whole day he alone resisted the clamours of an angry mob, bent on illegally condemning the ten generals who had conquered at Arginusae.

But it will be observed that Socrates, while claiming to have been often warned against inexpedient—not necessarily sinful—courses of action, admits and emphasizes the fact that he had never received positive instructions in the

path of duty from the same source. Herein, as we believe, the trustful follower of Christ has an advantage over the Athenian philosopher. There is a phrase which our fathers were fond of using, and which, though it has no direct warrant from Scripture, expresses I think a great spiritual reality: "The restraining and constraining power of the Spirit of God." The restraining power Socrates was sure that he had experienced; of the constraining power he had not felt the furthering help.

We may turn to the Acts of the Apostles for instances of both manifestations of this spiritual dynamic.

The Restraining Power (a crucial instance): "Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not." (Acts xvi. 6-7.)

The Constraining Power: "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." (Acts xiii. 2.)

"And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There stood a man of Macedonia, and

prayed him saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us ; and after we had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them.” (Acts xvi. 9-10.)

This, however, is a digression, though I think a necessary one, as illustrating the double character of that Divine guidance which (as we believe) was vouchsafed to many waiting souls before Christ came, and is still not withheld from many who have never heard of His appearance in the flesh, but are unconsciously longing for the arising of His day-star in their hearts. It has been one of the gains of Theology in the last half-century, that Christian thinkers have had their minds more opened to perceive these utterances, which Archbishop Trench admirably described as “the unconscious prophecies of heathendom.” Not that there were not wise-hearted and sympathetic Christian philosophers, even in earlier ages, who would have heartily accepted the teaching of Fox and Barclay as to the universality of Divine Grace. Thus Origen says : “When God sent Jesus to the human race, it was not as though He had just awoke from a long sleep ; but Jesus, though

He has only now for worthy reasons fulfilled the Divine plan of His incarnation, has at all times been doing good to the human race. For no noble deed among men has ever been done without the Divine Word visiting the souls of those who even for a brief space were able to receive such operations of the Divine Word.”¹

Far from us be the timorous exclusiveness which was at one time wont to minimize all evidences of a Divine Seed working in the souls of men, apart from the outward knowledge of “Jehovah and His Christ.” Such objectors pointed perhaps to the awful state of moral ruin in which the Roman world lay at the time of the coming of Christ. Most true; and who ever described that ruin more powerfully than the Apostle Paul, in the first chapter of his epistle to the Romans? Yet the same Apostle, standing in the rocky circlet of Areopagus, surrounded by the polytheistic Gentile throng, said, in words which I have already quoted, “God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and

¹ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, vi. 78. (I owe this quotation to Sanday, *Christologies, Ancient and Modern*, p. 18).

find Him, though He be not far from every one of us. As certain also of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' "

The statement also made by the same Apostle to the worshippers of Jupiter and Mercury at Lystra, that God, while suffering all nations in time past to walk in their own ways, "nevertheless left not Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness," though it deals rather with God's work in nature than in grace, still tends toward that wide, universal view of the Father's love to His children, which found perhaps its fullest expression in the words of Peter to Cornelius : "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him."

While man, with his small systems and formulas, is ever in danger of narrowing down the grace of God to the limits of some little stagnant pool of his own preparing, the great wide ocean of God's love flows round encircling the nations.

As o'er each continent and island
The dawn leads on another day,
The voice of prayer is never silent,
Nor dies the strain of praise away.

For this reason we shall, I trust, all feel that there is no reason to view with the alarm, which some theologians have felt, the growth of the new study of comparative religions, of the Vedas, the Koran, the Buddhist Tripitaka ; no reason why we should fear to admit that there are in them many glimpses of Divine Truth. We do not think that they are evidences that "Man by searching can find out God" ; but they are evidences that God, in His impartial untiring search, has everywhere found out man, and has found something in him which could answer to the Divine voice. The belief that God "in many parts and in divers manners¹ spake in time past unto our fathers by the prophets," even by the unconscious prophets of heathendom, in no way clashes with the belief that He has in a later age of the world spoken to it and to us by His Son.

Still, there will probably linger in some minds a fear lest in thus recognizing somewhat of the Divine in religions like the Brahmin, the Buddhist or the Islamic, we should be condoning the idolatrous corruptions of the first and second, and the hard sensuality of the third. Yet there is no real necessity to do this. "The corruption

¹ Πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως.

of the best is ever the worst," and I think we may say that even the million gods of the Brahman would not have been invented by the Animistic heathen of South Africa or Australia. There is surely deep teaching in our Lord's words about the enemy who came and sowed tares *among the wheat*. It was in the same good soil in which the grains of corn had been scattered that the tare-seeds were embedded ; not on a bare face of rock where neither wheat nor tares could have lived. The same fact of adulteration, which stares us so sadly in the face when we are reading the history of the Christian Church, also makes itself manifest in the history of Brahmanism and Buddhism,—perhaps to a less degree in that of Mohammedanism, which was never on the one hand finely spiritual, nor yet on the other hand idolatrous.

The guidance which was perhaps more felt than understood by the nations of the Gentile world, was both felt and understood by many of the sons of Israel, especially by the Prophets, and has, ever since the coming of Christ, been lying ready for the acceptance of His followers, if they would not put it away from themselves and judge themselves unworthy of so high a privilege.

It will perhaps occur to some of my readers that in emphasizing the fact that the Divine Voice thus sounded through the pre-Christian centuries, to Jew as well as to Gentile, and to Gentile as well as to Jew, I am leaving out of account what we call the supernatural, the miraculous, character of the revelation contained in the Old Testament. It is obvious that the attitude even of many devout believers towards miracles has changed during the last two generations. While the Christian apologists of the eighteenth century laid so great a stress on miracles that it almost seemed as if a certain amount of miraculous attestation should force a man to accept a religion which went utterly against all his moral and spiritual instincts, the difficulty at the present time is in the other direction. Miracles are, or have been, such a stumbling block to the scientific instinct of the age, that many have said "Good and beautiful as I feel the Christian religion to be, I cannot accept it, because it contains an appeal to the miraculous." I have heard of an earnest believer saying to such a proselyte of the gate, "If you cannot join us with the miracles, join us without them."

To my mind any such attempt to eliminate the

supernatural from the record of the Jewish and Christian revelations is impossible ; and I believe that even scientific minds, in view of the tremendous mysteries which science herself insists on our accepting, are less and less insisting on the demand being made. Nature is so overwhelming that it is scarce worth while for reason to fight against the supernatural.

But, while fully admitting the fact of miracle, I may be permitted to point out that there are many instances of Divine communications recorded in the Old Testament which are not and do not profess to be what we term miraculous. Take, for instance, that most memorable revelation of God's will to Abram, recorded in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis. It begins with "the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision." The Divine power brings the patriarch forth abroad, bids him look up to the starry sky of Palestine, and gives him the assurance "So shall thy seed be." There is nothing in this which might not happen to a Christian believer to-day. It is not till we get to the evening of the second day that, after sun-down, the smoking furnace and the burning lamp seem to tell of a visible interference with the order of nature.

Look at the life of Samuel and of most of the prophets his successors. (I except Elijah and Elisha, who seem to dwell in a world of wonder apart from the ordinary life even of the prophet). With most of the prophets the crisis of their career is contained in the words, "The word of the Lord came to me"; came, assuredly, for the most part not in waves of air beating upon the tympanum of the natural ear, but came in such spiritual shape and with such spiritual force as many of the Lord's servants are conscious of to-day. I have mentioned the instance of Samuel. While accepting the beautiful history of the audible voice heard by the little child in the sleeping-chamber at Shiloh, can we not see that, in the rest of the prophet's life, there is constant reference to the spiritually apprehended voice of the Lord, with very little claim to be the possessor of supernatural power? Read the story of Samuel's mission to Bethlehem, as recorded in the sixteenth chapter of the first book of Samuel, his heavy-hearted journey, his "family visit" to the house of Jesse, his hope that first one and then another of the stalwart young men who passed before him might be the future King of Israel, the "stop in his mind" which prevented his anointing any of them, and his final

recognition of the Divine choice of the little lad from the sheep-folds ; how like it all is to the stories of our own Quaker forefathers ! We might imagine that we were listening to the experience of “ a Friend under religious concern.”

The tendency to be perpetually asking for miracles as a proof of a Divine commission is one which is, I think, not encouraged in the Old Testament, and is pointedly rebuked in the New. “ This evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign ; and there shall no sign be given it but the sign of the prophet Jonas.” “ The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified ; to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.”

To sum up the whole discussion, I think that we may go back to the recorded experience of the most thaumaturgic of prophets, of Elijah, who after all found the fittest expression of the Divine in “ the still small voice.” So we, too, while recognizing somewhat of the Divine Power in the earthquake and the fire of miracle, may thankfully believe that God is more closely and powerfully present in the “ still small voice ”

which still speaks to His children, and brings us nearer to Him than any miracle.

III.

"Fellow-workers together with God."

Probably much of what I have just been saying will seem to some of my hearers the needless elaboration of self-evident truths. Of course, we, who believe in the existence of God, believe that every good gift and every perfect gift "is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning"; and, therefore, every step gained by man in his upward progress from the brute must have been gained with the help of the Almighty. True: perhaps it is axiomatic, the subject of this discourse: and yet I think it may be worth while to consider a little more clearly how the Creator has been working, in order to raise His creature, man, towards a fuller comprehension and imitation of Himself.

Veluti cadaver, "like a corpse," was, I believe, the motto, or the alleged motto, of some old Jesuit Doctor, in describing the absolute self-surrender of the great Society demanded of its neophytes. "No remonstrance, no questioning, no exercise of the individual will. Simply do,

like an automaton, the work which the General of the Order assigns to you."

Whether or no this was ever the kind of obedience demanded of the Jesuit novice, we may safely assert that it is not the kind of obedience claimed of us by our Heavenly Father. He deals with us not as automata, but as sons. He respects, may we not say, the wonderful gift of free-will which He has given us. He invites us to be fellow-workers together with Him, and delights in our willing service ; but, if we stand aloof, and say " We will not work in Thy vineyard, we prefer to lounge idly in the market-place," He leaves us to our stupid isolation. So far as we are concerned, the human race is the poorer by some little piece of territory, which might have been won from chaos by God working through us, and which has not been won.

And thus we come to these two words with which we are so familiar in the exhortations of our ministers, *Individual Faithfulness*.

It is all very well to glorify the privilege of humanity in having the opportunity of hearing a Divine Voice, and perceiving a heavenly inward Light ; but, unless we obey that Voice, and follow that Light, we wander and stumble in the darkness, and as far as we are concerned

nothing is being done towards the fulfilment of the Divine purpose.

¶ We can see what has been achieved for Humanity in some conspicuous instances by heroes of the faith. We can partly conjecture what a different world it would have been if Paul had been "disobedient to the heavenly vision." We look with admiration on the results of the lives of certain great missionaries such as Aidan, Columba, Brainerd, Morrison; but we know not what we may have missed by the faint-heartedness or the slothful self-indulgence of some unknown ones, who, having once been drawn into service by the beauty of the Lord, afterwards turned away and walked no more with Him.¹

However, not to sadden our souls unnecessarily with the thought of failure, let me choose an instance on the positive side, and show how "individual faithfulness" was rewarded by triumphs and benefits to humanity of which the individual "fellow-worker" little dreamed.

In the years between 1770 and 1780, while the long simmering discord between England and

¹ Adapting the well-known lines of Burns we may say:

"The *good* we partly may compute,
But know not what's resisted."

her American Colonies was boiling over into fierce and desolating war, a young tanner of Philadelphia, named William Savery, was passing through his civil war of the soul—which ended, not in successful revolt, but in the full surrender of his will to an unseen Lord.

A sentence or two taken almost at random from his *Journal* will sufficiently mark the stages of his spiritual combat.

“Notwithstanding my revolt and turning aside from the paths of purity and peace, the Lord has been graciously near me all my life long, and has watched over me as a tender father for good, has smitten me by His spirit when I have been rebelling against His holy law written in my heart, making merry over the divine witness there; and has reached to me and tendered me in the midst of mirth and jollity. He often followed me to my chamber, and upon my pillow has drawn tears of sorrow and contrition from me, when none have been privy to it but His all-seeing eye; so that my days of joy and laughter have often produced nights of sorrow and weeping.

“I now saw the iniquity of mis-spending my precious time, and refrained from frequenting taverns and places of diversion. I struggled

hard to break myself off from my fondness for such company, seeing the snare there was in it ; being apt to relate adventures and tales to provoke mirth, and often for the embellishment of them to strain beyond the truth." (A rather characteristic touch.) "I was much concerned to watch over myself in this, which is both dishonourable and sinful."

In 1778 he married, and settled in business in Philadelphia. As he says, "I had been employed in bringing myself to a more circumspect life, being pretty careful in my conduct and conversation, and just in my dealings among men, and was willing to believe I had attained to great matters and that I might now take up my rest. . . . But how can I sufficiently adore my great and good Master for His continued regard and care over me, in that He did not suffer me to remain long in this state of delusion and error !

"My eyes became more clearly opened to discern where I was, and that all the righteousness of my own putting on was as filthy rags, of which I must be stripped before I could experience a putting on of that purity and righteousness which is the fine linen of the saints. O ! these were never to be forgotten times of

baptism. One evening, sitting in my house alone, great horror and trouble seized me. I wept aloud, and after a short time went to bed, but my distress was so great that it almost overcame me, and I thought I tasted of the misery of fallen spirits. . . . In this state I was, through adorable mercy, released from the horror that before surrounded me, and was comforted with a sight and feeling of a state of inexpressible happiness and joy; and when so far come to myself as to have utterance given me, I cried aloud in this wise: 'O! now I know that my Redeemer liveth.'

"O! the sweetness I then felt in being favoured with such an evidence of the goodness and mercy of God! it far surpassed everything I had ever before experienced, and was such that I hope to bear it in remembrance as long as I have a being here. My dear partner, who shared with me in my afflictions, was also made a partaker with me in my exceeding joy. Blessed for ever be the name of the Lord, though He sees meet for our refinement to try us even to one hair's breadth, yet in our utmost extremity His all-powerful arm is made bare for our deliverance."

I have thought it good to introduce these

rather long extracts from the journal of a Quaker of the middle age of our Society, both in order to show how much he had in common with the Christian of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, and also to illustrate the inward and spiritual character of his conversion. Here we have no sudden transformation, wrought by the words of an eloquent preacher ; no book, not even the Bible, seems to have at once brought peace to his soul. In his case, as in that of George Fox, it is the Divine in-speaking voice which is to him the bearer of glad tidings. Soon after William Savery had undergone this momentous change of spiritual outlook, he began to "speak a few words in meetings by way of Gospel ministry," and in the year 1781 he was "acknowledged as a minister." I am not going to describe his various journeyings in his own country, to Virginia, to Maryland, to the Southern States, still less his labours—described at undue length in the *Journal*, but interesting from their transparent simplicity—to bring about a firm treaty of peace between the United States and the Six Nations of the Indians ; as they said, "to kindle the council fire and brighten the chain of friendship" between General Washington and Corn-planter, Red-jacket, Scanadoc and

the rest of the Indian braves. To accomplish this end he and his brother delegates from the "Meeting for Sufferings" at Philadelphia were "in journeyings oft"; and very rough and painful journeyings they were, and not altogether devoid of danger from the capricious temper of some of the Indians. He was attacked with fever, had to face the prospects of dying in the backwoods, far from his friends and relations and from his beloved Philadelphia; had a partial recovery, and in that state of semi-convalescence had to encounter storm and all but shipwreck in sailing down the Hudson and Lake Champlain. Bitter must have been the disappointment of himself and his colleagues in finding on their first journey that the Indians would not conclude a treaty, and on their second that the treaty which the representatives of the United States induced them to sign was in their judgment so unfair to the Indians that they could not conscientiously append to it their signatures.

Like most of his brethren in religious profession, William Savery was heart and soul on the side of the slaves. "On our road," he says, "we met between thirty and forty negroes of both sexes, almost naked, some of them lame and decrepit, travelling to Ashley Bridge, a

considerable distance off, there to be put up and sold at auction. This made our hearts sad, and made us reflect that certainly there is a righteous and omniscient Judge who commiserates the poor and oppressed, and takes cognisance of the actions of hard-hearted and merciless oppressors, and by terrible things in righteousness will sooner or later plead the cause of the afflicted." Did not we hear the echo of these "terrible things in righteousness" fifty years ago, in the world-shattering American Civil War?

In the spring of 1796 William Savery, in company with several other Ministering Friends, set out on a missionary journey to Germany, France and the British Isles. The fierce war which was then being waged between Revolutionary France and Great Britain in alliance with Austria caused them some inconvenience in passing from country to country; but otherwise makes little impression on the pages of his Journal, which is chiefly occupied with descriptions of his meetings: "a solid relieving time," "laborious," "large and satisfactory," and so forth—but varied by remarks, often very shrewd, on the appearance of the country and the manners of the people. He was able to

preach with tolerable fluency in German, but his French, as he says, sometimes needed mending by his friend Louis Majolier, who seems generally to have acted as interpreter.

His mission was primarily to the little companies of Friends already gathered at Pyrmont and Minden in Germany, and at Congenies in the South of France, but by no means exclusively to these ; indeed, wherever he went in North Germany he seems to have found listeners ready to go a long way with him in their acceptance of spiritual religion. In France there was not nearly so much of an open door ; indeed of the French Friends he says, " Our Friends here have not yet banished that lively activity of spirit and quickness of imagination, so characteristic of their nation, and may be in danger of carrying into it their most serious concerns ; they do not appear to have that visionary disposition, and desire of penetrating hidden mysteries, so observable in the Germans ; and indeed the two nations differ in almost everything."

Two things will, I think, strike every attentive reader of this remarkable Journal.

First, the size of the audiences which were gathered to his meetings, and the extraordinary

effect produced upon them. Congregations of two hundred and five hundred are often mentioned ; sometimes they even reach up to a thousand. Though occasionally there is a little lightness or restlessness at first, even the silence awes them, and at the end of the meeting many are in tears. "Our heavenly Father, who is graciously pleased to be with those who trust in Him, was, in a very remarkable manner, mouth and wisdom, tongue and utterance to us. Although the meeting continued three hours, and many had to stand in a crowded situation the whole time, nothing like restlessness appeared. An uncommon solemnity prevailed over the assembly, such as I have seldom seen in any country amongst a mixed multitude of strangers, and great brokenness was among them."

As none of the sermons are recorded in W. Savery's Journal, we can only conjecture their style from the effect produced upon the hearers. Evidently there was something in him of the magnetism of a great preacher.

But, secondly, there is conspicuously visible in him an earnest desire not to go beyond the word of the Lord, to say less or more : as our Friends of the last generation often said, "Not

to go before nor to lag behind our Guide.” Though longing to return home after more than two years’ absence, he lingers because he does not feel himself “‘clear’ of London.” On the other hand he sometimes declines to hold a second or third meeting when pressed to do so by those who have attended the first; and especially he desires to be kept safe from the vanity of the preacher. “After meeting, some pious persons expressed themselves in an affectionate manner. I hope the kind expressions of some, after meetings, will only have a tendency to make me more humble and sensible that to me belongs nothing, but all to Him whose is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, and all the praise of His own works for ever; our rejoicing is the testimony of our consciences, not the ‘Well done’ of the people.” (p. 243.)

“A publication appeared in one of the public papers, approving of what was delivered at Norwich and Bath; but I thank my God who has yet preserved me from being elated or much depressed by the ‘well’ or ‘ill done’ of the world. If I can but obtain the answer of a conscience void of offence to God and Man, that is the great object of my concern, and will be enough” (p. 280).

The last quotation refers to William Savery's visits to Bath and Norwich, two places both of which were somewhat "burdensome" to his spirit, because of the fashionable attire and worldly conversation of the wealthy Friends who were dominant in the meetings. Of Bath he says, "Very few of the members of our Society here have the appearance of Friends, and some said they were sorry they could not attend [at the public meeting], but they were engaged on parties at that hour."

Of the meeting at Norwich (First day, 4th of second month, 1798) he writes: "Attended their meeting; some not members stepped in, and there were about 200 under our name; very few middle aged or young persons who had a consistent appearance in their dress; indeed I thought it the gayest meeting of Friends I ever sat in, and was grieved to see it."

One may conjecture that the grave, much-enduring man would rather have been tossing about on Lake Champlain under a storm of rain, than sitting silent among all those smartly-dressed gentlefolks, seeking vainly for some sense of brotherhood between them and his own soul. "I expected," his Journal continues, "to pass the meeting in silent suffering, but at length

believed it most for my peace to express a little, and through gracious condescension was favoured to relieve my mind, and many were tendered."

Among the many who were thus tendered was one whom an unprophetic mind would have perhaps deemed the least likely in the whole assemblage to be reached by the words of the messenger. There, under the gallery, sat a bevy of fair damsels, the oldest of them, who had to act as mother to the rest, but twenty-two years old; the youngest only thirteen; the seven motherless daughters of John Gurney, of Earlham. Often as the following passage, describing the effect of the American Minister's preaching on one of the sisterhood, has been quoted, I think it will be necessary to quote it once more. Elizabeth Gurney's sister, Richenda, thus describes this eventful day. "On that day we seven sisters sat as usual in a row under the gallery; I sat by Betsy; William Savery was there; we liked having Yearly Meeting Friends come to preach, it was a little change. Betsy was generally rather restless at meeting, and on this day I remember her very smart boots were a great amusement to me; they were purple laced with scarlet.

“At last [evidently after a long interval of silence] William Savery began to preach. His voice and manner were arresting, and we all liked the sound. Her attention became fixed; at last I saw her begin to weep, and she became a good deal agitated. As soon as Meeting was over she begged my father to let her dine with William Savery at the Grove [her uncle’s house where the visitor was staying], to which he soon consented, though rather surprised by the request; we went home as usual, and for a wonder we wished to go again in the afternoon. I have not the same clear remembrance of this Meeting, but the next scene that has fastened itself on my memory is our return home in the carriage. Betsy sat in the middle and astonished us all by the great feeling that she showed. She wept most of the way home. The next morning William Savery came to breakfast, and preached afterwards to our dear sister, prophesying of the high and important calling she would be led into. What she went through in her own mind I cannot say, but the results were most powerful and most evident. From that day her love of pleasure and of the world seemed gone.”

So ends Richenda’s story. Betsy, her next

oldest sister, was eighteen years old when this event occurred, which was thus described in her own journal : " I wish the state of enthusiasm I am now in may last, for to-day *I have felt that there is a God* ; I have been devotional, and my mind has been led away from the follies that it is mostly wrapped up in. I have longed for virtue, I hope to be truly virtuous, not to be enthusiastic and foolish, but only to be so far religious as will lead to virtue. There seems nothing so little understood as religion."

Even these utterances in the poor child's journal give a hint of the shallow Deistic talk about religion to which she and her sisters had been exposed during the six years since their mother's death. In reading William Savery's journal we can see that he felt it to be his especial mission to combat the "errors of Deism," and certainly his influence on the mind of his young disciple would be all exerted in the direction of faith in a personal Saviour. At any rate it was thitherward that all her aspirations thenceforward tended. She had been looking for "virtue," and now she found Christ.

William Savery met his young convert two or three times in London, whither she had gone in order to test the reality of her new experiences

by comparing them with the attractions of the gay world ; and he also addressed her in a long (rather too long according to our present feelings) but loving letter, in which he calls her " My dear child," and assures her that " my attachment has not been more cordial and agreeable to any young Friend in England, and my heart leaped with joy to find that thou art willing to acknowledge a state of hunger and thirst after righteousness " ; but his journal shows that he was not without anxiety as to the durable nature of the impression made by his ministry. " The marks of wealth and grandeur are too obvious in several families of Friends in this place (Norwich), which made me sorrowful ; yet I saw but little opening to relieve my mind. Though several of the younger branches are enabled through Divine grace to see what the truth leads to, yet it is uncertain whether, with all the alluring things of this world around them, they will choose the simple safe path of self denial."

At length, on August 1st, 1798, six months after his visit to Norwich, William Savery embarked on the ship which was to bear him homeward ; but partly owing to stress of weather, and partly to alarms from French cruisers, the

voyage occupied more than two months, and it was not till October 19th that he landed at New York.

The city which he constantly calls his "beloved Philadelphia" was then suffering from an awful visitation of yellow fever, and, though he was able to rejoin his wife and children, it was apparently some time before it was safe for them to return to their home. He was, however, foremost in the work of visiting the sick, and went back as soon as possible to his old business in the tan-yard, while continuing as of yore his service as a minister. His constitution, however, was evidently impaired by the hardships of his long journeys, probably too by the malignant influence of the fever which again and again visited Philadelphia. After about three months' illness, he died on June 19th, 1804, in the fifty-fourth year of his age. Not long before his death he said to a friend: "I thought I was once strong for the work, but now I am a child, brought back to my horn-book, and have nothing to trust to but the mercy of God through Christ my Saviour."

Now, if this good man's life had been surveyed from a point near at hand, say within ten years of his decease, it might perhaps, notwithstanding

all its noble singleness of aim, have been pronounced a failure. The sufferings of the negro slaves, with whom he had deeply sympathized, grew sharper, and even the slave-trade still continued. His friends and clients of the Six Indian Nations were pushed ever further westward, and Chicago now stands on land which they regarded as undoubtedly their own. The little communities of Friends in Germany and the south of France, which might have grown and prospered in peace, were blighted, and have been all but destroyed by twenty years of European war, and the baleful influence of the system of universal military conscription which it has left as a legacy to Europe. If he kept up a regular correspondence with England, he may have heard that his young convert at Norwich was now Elizabeth Fry, of Mildred's Court, London, the happy mother of children, and filling a useful place in the Society which he loved. But there the comforting tidings would end. None could foresee that thirteen years later that delicate young wife and mother would be entering the Gehenna of an English gaol as it then was, and beginning her marvellously successful battle with the rampant wickedness, squalor and wretchedness of Newgate. If

William Savery on his death-bed thought at all of his fair-haired young convert, she was probably to him still his dear child ; certainly not the sweet-voiced preacher, the world-famed prison reformer, the founder of the first Nursing Sisterhood in England, probably the best known of the Saints of Quakerism.

Her glorious example has, without doubt, stimulated many of her younger sisters to imitate in one way or other her labours of love. I have some reason to believe that one of these was that other Saint of the nineteenth century, Florence Nightingale, who certainly began her nursing training at Kaiserswerth very soon after Elizabeth Fry's visit to that institution. If there be any foundation for this often-repeated statement, what a remarkable chain of spiritual influence have we here, extending from Philadelphia to Scutari, from 1780 to 1854 ! May we not then venture to say that many a sore wounded soldier by the Euxine was either won back to life, or died a happier death, because the simple-hearted citizen of Philadelphia " was not disobedient to the Heavenly Vision " !

IV.

"We see not yet all things put under Him."

IN the biographies of Christians we generally find the chief emphasis laid on the effect which the reception of the message of the Gospel has had on the *individual* soul, on the joy of the first espousals to Christ, on the conflicts, the triumphs, and perhaps the defeats of later years. This is of course right and fitting when the story of the individual life is being told. Perhaps the only fault that may sometimes be rightly laid to the biographer's charge is that he tries to reveal too much of that secret heart-to-heart intercourse of the believer with his Saviour which is the chief, but also the incommunicable, joy of the spiritual life. As is so beautifully said in the Apocalyptic message to the Church at Pergamos: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written which *no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*" There are secrets between the soul of man and his Maker into which not even the dearest friend should seek to pry.¹ It is not, however,

¹ Compare the words of St. Benedict, "*Secretum meum mihi*" and also a saying of the Arabs of the Desert, "Only God and I know what is in my heart."

this individual life with all its joys and all its sorrows with which we have now to deal. My leading thought, and that to which I must now return, is the effect *upon the human race* of the Divine guidance vouchsafed to individuals.

I think we may accept as a token for good that there is now more of this "universal spirit" in our religious literature than there was a generation or two ago. Instead of spending their time writing journals, often rather morbid journals, of their religious experience; instead of, as has been said, perpetually fingering their spiritual muscles to see if they were growing in strength; the Christian of to-day opens wide the windows of his soul to let

The still sad music of humanity

float into his quiet chamber, and then goes forth to fight, with such strength as the *Archēgos* of his salvation may give him, for the destruction of all these agencies which make its unnecessary sadness. And in all this work he is surely obeying that "upward calling" by which the Maker is lifting the human race on to its highest plane, and re-making it in the image of Himself.¹

¹ See Note A. (p. 73)

But I know it will be said, and we must give a little time to the consideration of this question :
 “ Has there been any real upward progress of the race, or, if we admit it for the earlier ages of the world, must we not deny, or at least doubt it, for the nations of modern Europe ? ”

We shall all agree that mere mechanical inventions, the enlargement of our power over nature by clever appropriation of the once hidden forces of steam and electricity, count for little or nothing towards the true upward progress of the race. As Mrs. Browning has well said :

Why, what is this patient entrance into Nature's deep
 resources,

But the child's most gradual learning to walk upright
 without bane ?

When we drive out from the cloud of steam majestic
 white horses,

Are we greater than the first men who led black ones
 by the mane ?

If we trod the depths of ocean, if we struck the stars in
 rising,

If we wrapped the globe intensely with one hot elec-
 tric breath,

'Twere but power within our tether, no new spirit power
 comprising,

And in life we were not greater men—nor bolder men
 in death.

Can we truly say, looking forth over this wide
 seething world of humanity, that there is any

nearer approach to its re-making in the Image of God than there was in the days of the Imperial Antonines, of the Feudal Middle Ages, of the Reformation, of the Evangelical Revival, of the Forty Years' Peace? A hard question, yet I think the answer may be a fairly hopeful *Yes*.

Some abatement of the old hardness and ferocity of manners; the utter extinction of the old system of blood-feuds which our Celtic and Teutonic ancestors brought with them into the provinces of the Roman Empire; the weakened influence of old superstitions; the abolition, at any rate the theoretical abolition, of slavery in all Christian countries; a little increase in religious toleration (at least the *auto-da-fè* in any civilized country is no longer conceivable); an immense advance in all that relates to the science and art of healing; the erection and maintenance of splendid hospitals; in all the foremost nations of the world a fuller recognition than ever before of the truth that, if one member of the body socially suffers, all the members suffer with it; and hence, on the whole, though with many lamentable exceptions, a kindlier and more sympathetic feeling between the various classes of society; these are some of the gains which may be fairly claimed for Humanity in the

eighteen centuries since Christ came. And, speaking at least for this generation, we may truthfully say—what could not have been said for the generation with whom Berkeley and Butler argued—that the beauty of the life of Christ, as a pattern for the whole human race, is generally acknowledged, more fully perhaps than in any preceding age. The scholars are looking at the head-line of their copy-books, though not always copying it even as carefully as their rude fingers might.

Some upward progress : yes, but ah ! how far is man yet from being “renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him !” To take only one thought, the relation of the civilized to the uncivilized races of mankind ; or, to put it more plainly, of the white man to his dark-skinned brethren. Here are we, “heirs of all the ages in the foremost files of time,” we, who under the Divine leading have developed such marvellous aptitudes for obtaining dominion over nature, we, to whom the ten talents of intellect have been given, while the African and the Polynesian has had to be content with one. And, when we come in contact with our backward brother, how do we exert our influence over him ? Do we give him a helping

hand, and try gently to raise him to our higher platform of being? Yes, sometimes; bear witness Lovedale and Uganda. But, for one earnest and successful missionary like Dr. Stewart or John G. Paton, what thousands of white men have gone amongst the Kaffirs or the Maoris only to debase and defraud them, selling them rum or gunpowder, and buying wide reaches of their country for the cheapest trumpery. Not only is it a melancholy fact that the native races generally fade away before the advent of the European, but also that when they do not so disappear they are too often practically reduced to slavery. We thought, some of us, that slavery had received its death-blow in 1865, when the Southern States of America were vanquished by the North; but it is too evident that, without continued care and watchful jealousy on the part of the friends of freedom, the slave system, or that which is its practical equivalent, will creep in again wherever the greedy and unprincipled European has a chance of imposing himself upon his weaker dark-skinned brother. All this is assuredly contrary to the eternal purpose, and, for all this, "civilization," unless it mends its ways, will one day have to give an account.

Still, Slavery we may hope is dying ; but how about that other great scourge of humanity, War ? The old Hebrew prophet saw plainly that if the Lord, whose word he was proclaiming, was really to judge among the nations, the necessary result must be that they would beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks ; that nation should not lift up sword against nation, neither should they learn war any more. So far, theoretically, we have got, but, in the course of twenty-five centuries, and with the Spirit of Christ to help us, not much farther. The absolute cessation of war is still looked upon as a counsel of perfection, a beautiful millennial dream, which will come to pass some day perhaps if the sun has not cooled down before its accomplishment. The outward magnificence of the military system, "the pomp, the circumstance of glorious war," helps it to prolong its hold upon the minds of men. Doubtless, if we could behold the review of one of the great Continental armies, we too should for the time be fascinated by the grandeur of the spectacle. Thousands of men splendidly accoutred, splendidly mounted, dash past the flag under which sits the mighty war-lord. Their swords flash forth, they shout

“hurrah,” the earth seems to tremble under their tread. A glorious sight, but does it not derive all its glory from that lower animal world out of which man has been called ? It is the glory of the lion, of the eagle, of the bear ; and not without a secret sympathy with the brute have the kings and great ones of the earth chosen such animal forms as these for the emblems of their power.

But, “made in the image of God ! ” What has man, called to this high destiny, to do with the pugnacities and revenges, with the bloodshed and the carnage, of the brute creation ? Can we really imagine men renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created them, devoting the best energies of their minds to the perfecting of machines for the destruction of their brethren, devising artillery which shall crush out of life an unseen foe some ten miles distant ; a torpedo which shall pierce the hull of a stately vessel and sink a thousand men suddenly beneath the ocean ; or an aëroplane from which a bomb may be dropped upon an unsuspecting enemy ? Are these the works of the children of light, or of the sons of darkness, some of the works of the devil, for the eventual destruction of which the Son of God was manifested ? I do not forget,

let none of us ever forget, the many hearts full of love for Christ that have beaten beneath the soldier's jacket, Havelock, Stonewall-Jackson, Gordon, and a thousand more like them. But, though these men did not perceive the essential incongruity between Christ and War, *we do*, and I believe the present and the coming generations are perceiving and will perceive it yet more clearly. There is nothing in all these arguments against war for him who does not believe in God's revelation of Himself through Christ; but he who does must sometimes look on that picture of Divine Love and Pity which is presented by Jesus of Nazareth, and contrast it with the God of Battle who

Smiles a smile more dreadful
Than his own dreadful frown
When he sees the thick black cloud of smoke
Go up from the slaughtered town.

It seems to some of us, musing upon these things and pondering on the future of the world, that Christianity must destroy War: if not, War will destroy Christianity.

Looking upon the past, and striving to forecast the future of our race, I seem to see an endless procession moving along an upward-tending path on a mountain side. We have

already climbed far from the morasses in which we started. Most beautiful in the distance are the Delectable Mountains on which the sunlight rests. But between us and them lies a craggy, cruel ravine of impenetrable darkness, from which at intervals arise the cries and groans of men, women and children sacrificed to the Moloch of war. Till that ravine can be spanned, till the misery and the waste, the folly and the bestial ferocity of the war system can be put behind us, the Delectable Mountains cannot be reached, the happiness which the Maker has in store for man cannot be fully tasted. But is it possible that this dream, which all men praise as a dream, can ever become reality? No! it is absolutely impossible if God is not, if there be no righteous Governor of the Universe; but if He is, and if it be, as we assuredly believe, His will, He will bring it to pass, He will "break the bow and snap the spear in sunder;" He will "burn the war-chariot in the fire!"

Few of our Christian writers have enough of the courage of hope to speak of these things which we all more or less long for. I find that I must go back to the old Israelitish prophet to express for us what the passage of that deadly ravine would mean.

“And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those; the wayfaring man”—what we call the man in the street—“though a fool, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there”—the monarch of the animal world has lost his glory—“nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

O! the wonderful happiness which the Father has in store for the Human Race, if only they will listen to His voice, will obey the gentle pressure of His hand, and not judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life.¹

¹ See Note B. (p. 77).

Notes

NOTE A. (see p. 63).—*What should be the aim of the Christian Church?*

Should it be the aim and object of the Church of Christ to make the world better? Perhaps this question seems almost absurd, because the affirmative answer is so obvious. And yet not quite obvious, because there are some Christians, and those not the least loyal to the Master, who think that the Church should live its own life, almost regardless of the world around it, which "lieth in wickedness," and will—they would almost say "must"—go on growing worse and worse till the day of its final doom. The World is Sodom; let Lot escape from it to Zoar, lest he share its fate. The conclusion is not perhaps often stated quite so broadly as this, but those who are acquainted with a certain class of religious teachers, especially the interpreters of unfulfilled prophecy, will, I think, recognize it as the limit towards which they tend. I have nowhere seen this doctrine of the future temporary ascendancy of evil more clearly stated than by a great biblical scholar, the late Dr. Tregelles, in his *Remarks on the Prophetic Visions of the Book of Daniel* (p. 199-200): "To some it may seem a dark and discouraging prospect thus to contemplate what the issue will be of professing Christianity within the Roman earth; to see the corruption which goes on, as that which will at last increase so as to lead to full anti-Christian apostasy—the rejection of God and of Christ. But, if it be different

from the prospects which many have imagined, we have only to ask whether this is not the truth of Scripture. If this be the case, then it is well for us to know it ; for God never instructs us by holding out false expectations. Have not the Apostles Paul (2 Timothy iii.), John (in speaking of many anti-Christ's as a characteristic of "the last time"), James (v. 1-8), Peter (2 Ep., ch. iii.) and Jude, all taught us that the concluding days of this dispensation will be days of peculiar evil in the Church and in the world up to the coming of the Lord ? "

I have thought it only right to put this view of the probable future of the world before the reader, that he may see how far the more optimistic view of that future which pervades this lecture is from being accepted by all Christians. I have indicated in the lecture itself some of the many passages of scripture which seem to me to point to a different conclusion from that reached by Dr. Tregelles. I have not space here to enter upon a full discussion of the subject, but I may just suggest that probably all the passages of Scripture which seem to support his contention are of the kind now known as " Eschatological." They were all, I think, written by men who thought that the return of Christ to earth, and the end of the then existing Aion, were nigh at hand ; and they are therefore inevitably modified by that other great spiritual fact, the lapse of nearly 2,000 years since the visible appearance of Christ upon earth. In a certain sense it may be said that this long suspense is in itself a further revelation, showing that the manner of the Almighty's working was not just that which James

and Peter and John had supposed, and therefore, the great drama being so wonderfully prolonged, its *finale* was not necessarily so tragic as seemed inevitable to the fishermen by the Galilean Lake who heard the Master's teaching.

Since the above was written I have met with the following passage in Prof. Gwatkin's *The Knowledge of God* (Vol. II., pp. 56-58), which puts the contrast between the two views above described so well that I think I must be allowed to quote it. I may state however, for myself, that it is not so much from "Disciplinarian" (that is, highly ecclesiastical) Christians, as from Evangelicals of a certain type, that I have heard the teaching of the necessarily tragic end of the present dispensation.

"Broadly speaking, Jewish particularism, legality and traditionalism are represented in Christian thought by the religion of the natural man, which has always commanded a majority in Christendom, and is deemed authoritative by those who worship majorities for want of a reason for their belief; while the best thought of the east, which had its echoes in the west, and is once more coming to the surface in the north, caught with more success the universal and eternal meaning claimed for the Lord's person, not His teaching, as the infinite and final revelation of the truth of this world and the other. Or, if I may borrow a classification from my Oxford colleague (Prof. Bigge), to the Disciplinarian he is the Living Bread which came down from Heaven once for all in such a year of Cæsar Augustus; to the Mystic He is also the Bread of God which is

“ever coming down from Heaven, and ever giving
“life to the whole world. They both confess in
“Him their Lord and Saviour, the conqueror of
“death and sin ; but then they separate. The
“one looks back to the majestic memory of a
“revelation given once for all, a visible Church set
“up once for all, with a sacred trust of laws and
“ordinances to be maintained against a wicked
“world. He is the materialist of Christian
“thought, as firmly convinced as any unbeliever
“that the Gospel works contrary to nature and
“reason. So he looks for its evidence in breaches
“of natural order, finds the grace of Heaven in
“sacraments and mysteries outside the domain of
“reason, and waits for salvation in the horrors
“of the Lord’s return, when he shall over-
“throw like Sodom a world beyond His power
“fully to redeem. The other lives by a growing
“revelation, and a growing knowledge of an ever-
“living Person whose kingdom ruleth over all, but
“only by the appeal of love divine to the image
“of God in man. He is the idealist of Christian
“thought, who sees in reason and nature no
“mirage of hellish magic, but shadows of the
“eternal truth incarnate in the Son of Man. So
“he looks for the evidence of the Gospel in its
“revelation of this world’s true estate and order,
“sees the grace of Heaven in every work that is
“done on the wide earth for love and duty, and
“looks for life eternal here and now, not simply
“as the future issue of some far-off divine
“catastrophe. In a word, the one believes the
“Gospel because it contradicts nature and reason ;

“the other because ‘That which hath been made
“was life in Him, and the life was the light of
“men’ ” (John i. 3, 4, R.V. margin).

NOTE B. (see p. 72).—*Other antagonistic influences besides war.*

In speaking as I have done of the urgent need for humanity of getting rid of the existing war system and spirit of militarism, I do not wish to ignore the fact that other influences possessing tremendous power over the minds of men are also at work to prevent them from being re-made in the Divine likeness. Of course there are such influences, only too many and too mighty. The congested slum district, the sweated industry, gambling, speculation, alcoholism, the disease of millionairism, the vicious novel, the adulterous drama—all such incidents as these in the world’s “conversation”—are wholly alien to the upward calling, and all tend to help the downward falling of our fellows from the privileged estate of the many sons called unto glory.

But many of these influences, if we could examine into their life history, would be found to have sprung out of the war system, or to be closely connected with it, and after all we do not, by attacking one giant evil that afflicts our race, in any way tie our hands from dealing with others.

A more serious objection, in fact the most serious objection, to a general peace crusade, is the fear lest courage and manhood should die out of the civilized nations of the world if war, actual or possible, were not here to exercise its bracing

influence on humanity. I think the argument is more often used by those who know war in poetry and in art than by those who have faced its often squalid and selfish reality ; but let as be just even to the war-God, and admit that many natures have gained in nobleness under his stern tuition. Yet let us also come back to our primal thought, "renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." Can we think that the eternal Father needs for the perfecting of the nature of His children that they should for ever, under the influence of hatred and revenge and all that is most un-Godlike in their hearts, be inflicting on one another every imaginable misery ? Surely, if the war-fiend were laid, there is enough in the conditions of Man's life on this planet, enough in the necessary battle with what we call the forces of nature, to call forth virility and courage. It is no disparagement of the fine qualities of the soldier to say that the lifeboat-man, the member of a fire-brigade, the hospital doctor at a time of deadly pestilence, the missionary to a barbarous people, the shepherd battling with a snow-storm on the Cheviots for the sake of his sheep, may be all in their several ways as truly heroic as the soldier.

As for the sentiment which I saw a little while ago attributed to a Continental officer, that "the world would be a very dull place if there was never to be a chance of a war in it," one can only say that the man who thus looks on human life as only a play enacted before him to save him from *ennui* ; the man who does not care to enter into the enquiry "What is the meaning of it all as planned by the Almighty

Author ? ; " the man who says he could not bear to live in a world without armies or without war, should modify in his repetition the first two petitions in the Lord's Prayer : " May Thy Kingdom not come just now ; never while I live may Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

Reflecting upon the whole matter, I cannot but feel that it is a remarkable fact, and one not to be explained as a mere coincidence, that the one section of the Christian Church which has been the most earnest in its insistence on the necessity of listening inwardly to the Divine Voice, is also the one which has from the first insisted most earnestly—often, as it has seemed to its sister churches, most inopportunately—on the essential incompatibility of Christianity and War. But I must repeat that there are many other things in our modern scheme of life, against which the re-making in the Divine Image has to strive. If all armies were disbanded to-morrow, and all Dreadnoughts consigned to the scrap-heap, not even then would " all things be put under " their rightful Lord. Probably none of us can imagine the next development of the upward calling. May we, or rather those that come after us, be faithful to the leadings of the Heavenly Guide.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.—It may not unnaturally be supposed that the concluding portion of the foregoing Lecture has some reference to the negotiations now in progress for a full Arbitration Treaty between Great Britain and the United States. The Author wishes, therefore, to state

that the Lecture had been finished for about a fortnight, and was on its way to the printer, when Sir Edward Grey made his memorable speech on that subject to the House of Commons:

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